CLAIMS AMENDMENTS

Please cancel Claims 1-3 and 5-17, without prejudice.

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (cancelled)

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (cancelled)

Claim 6 (cancelled)

Claim 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (cancelled)

Claim 10 (cancelled)

Claim 11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (cancelled)

Claim 13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (cancelled)

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (cancelled)

Claim 17 (cancelled)

Claim 18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (cancelled)

Claim 21 (cancelled)

Claim 22 (cancelled)

Claim 23 (cancelled)

Claim 24 (cancelled)

Claim 25 (cancelled)

Claim 26 (cancelled)

Claim 27 (cancelled)

Claim 28 (cancelled)

Claim 29 (cancelled)

Claim 30 (cancelled)

Claim 31 (cancelled)

Claim 32 (cancelled)

Claim 33 (cancelled)

34. (new) A method of treating cardiac disease in a mammal comprising administering to or expressing in said mammal an effective amount of a compound or agent that blocks or otherwise specifically inhibits mammalian Ste20-like kinase (Mst1) wherein said compound is an Mst1 inhibitor which is a dominant negative mutant of Mst1.

35. (new) The method of Claim 34 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

36. (new) The method of Claim 34 wherein said cardiac disease is selected from the group of congestive heart failure, cardiomyopathy, including ischemic and nonischemic cardiomyopathy, coronary artery disease, arrhythmias, fibrosis of the heart, valve defects, atherosclerosis, and instances where facilitation of enhanced heart function or maintenance of cardiac myocytes is desired.

37. (new) The method of Claim 34 wherein said mammal is a human.

38. (new) A method of modulating cardiac myocyte apoptosis in a mammal comprising administering to or expressing in said mammal an effective amount of a compound or agent that blocks or otherwise specifically inhibits Mst1 wherein said compound is an Mst1 inhibitor which is a dominant negative mutant of Mst1.

39. (new) The method of Claim 38 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

40. (new) A method of reducing cardiomyopathy in a mammal comprising administering to or expressing in said mammal an effective amount of a compound or agent that blocks or otherwise specifically inhibits mammalian Ste20-like kinase (Mst1) wherein said compound is an Mst1 inhibitor which is a dominant negative mutant of Mst1.

41. (new) The method of Claim 40 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

42. (new) A method for treating cardiac disease in a mammal comprising administering to or expressing in said mammal an effective amount of a compound or agent that blocks or otherwise specifically inhibits mammalian Ste20-like kinase (Mst1) wherein said compound is an Mst1 inhibitor which is a dominant negative mutant of Mst1, in combination with one or more other compounds for treatment of cardiac disease or of atherosclerosis.

43. (new) The method of Claim 42 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

44. (new) The method of Claim 42 wherein said one or more other compound is selected from the group of a beta-blocker, nitrate, calcium channel antagonists, angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, an anti-platelet drug, diuretics, digoxin and antilipemic agents, agents which alter cholesterol or lipid metabolism.

45. (new) A method for reducing the risk of cardiomyopathy or cardiac dysfunction in a mammal wherein said mammal has suffered a myocardial infarct or other coronary event wherein blood flow to the heart is reduced comprising administering to or expressing in said mammal an effective amount of a compound or agent that blocks or otherwise specifically inhibits mammalian Ste20-like kinase (Mst1) wherein said compound is an Mst1 inhibitor which is a dominant negative mutant of Mst1.

46. (new) The method of Claim 45 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

47. (new) A method of cardioprotection in a mammal, wherein a specific inhibitor of Mst1 selected from a dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is administered to or expressed in said mammal in conjunction with or following therapy with a compound or drug which is cardiotoxic.

48. (new) The method of Claim 47 wherein said dominant negative mutant of Mst1 is K59R.

49. (new) The method of Claim 47 wherein said compound is a chemotherapeutic agent, particularly an anti-cancer or anti-tumor agent.

50. (new) The method of Claim 47 wherein said chemotherapeutic agent is doxorubicin.